

From the Upper Chamber



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Report for Wednesday, March 12, 2008

The thirty-first day of the 2008 legislative session was called to order by Lieutenant Governor **Casey Cagle**.

Senator **Don Balfour** of the 9th stated that the journal had been read and was found to be correct.

Senate Bill 555 and Senate Resolutions 1120, 1147, 1151 and 1152 were read for the first time and assigned to committees. The clerk then read the reports of standing committees and second readers.

After the morning roll call, Sen. **Johnny Grant** of the 25th introduced two Eagle Scouts at the rostrum who led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then introduced the *Chaplain of the Day*, Pastor **Jay Hodges** of the First United Methodist Church of Milledgeville, who led the Senate in the daily devotional.

Sen. **Ed Tarver** of the 22nd took the rostrum to introduce Coach **Dave Odom** of the University of South Carolina's basketball program.

Sen. **John Douglas** of the 17th took the well on a Point of Personal Privilege to thank Home Depot co-founder **Bernie Marcus** for his generosity in covering medical care costs of injured soldiers being treated at the Shepherd Spinal Center in Atlanta.

SR 1141 and 1161 were then read and adopted.

The clerk read SR 1058, which recognizes the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce. Senators **Seth Harp** of the 29th and **Ed Harbison** of the 15th took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The clerk read SR 1049, which commends the work of **Orrin "Checkmate" Hudson**, founder of the Be Someone program for at-risk children. Sen. **Gloria Butler** of the 55th took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The Senate Consent Calendar for Privileged Resolutions, consisting of SR 1118, 1119, 1121-1140, 1142-1146, 1149, 1150 and 1153-1157, was unanimously adopted.

Sen. **Horacena Tate** of the 38th took the rostrum to introduce the *Doctor of the Day*, Dr. **Adrienne D. Mims** of Southwest Atlanta.

The clerk read SR 1076, which commends the achievements of the Marion Middle School Archery Team. Sen. **George Hooks** of the 14th took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The clerk read SR 726, which congratulates the City of Clarkston on the occasion of its 125th birthday. Sen. **Butler** took the rostrum to speak to the resolution and to introduce Clarkston Mayor **Lee Swaney** and Councilwoman **Pat Morris** to the Senate.

The clerk read SR 1154, which congratulates Georgia State University President **Carl Patton** on the occasion of his retirement. Sen. **Ronnie Chance** of the 16th took the rostrum to speak to the resolution.

The Senate Local Consent Calendar, consisting of House Bills 1361, 1374 and 1385, passed by a vote of 50 to 0.

The clerk read HB 297, which provides certain exemptions to allow for RV dealers to sell vehicles at exhibition events. Sen. **Ross Tolleson** of the 20th took the well to present the bill.

HB 297 passed by a vote of 53 to 0.

Sen. **Tolleson** moved that HB 297 be immediately transmitted to the House of Representatives. There was no objection.

The clerk read House Resolution 1158, which commends the Georgia Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO) on sponsoring the organization's annual convention, BIO 2009, in Atlanta. Sen. **Jack Murphy** of the 27th took the well to present the resolution.

HR 1158 was adopted by a vote of 54 to 0.

The clerk read HB 1088, which allows agricultural businesses to be recognized as tourist attractions by the Department of Agriculture. Sen. **Hooks** took the well to present the bill. He yielded to questions from Sen. **John Bulloch** of the 11th.

HB 1088 passed by a vote of 52 to 0.

The clerk read HB 1055, which makes procedural and administrative changes to Georgia law relating to professions and licenses. Sen. **Chance** took the well to present the bill and yielded to questions from Sen. **Nan Orrock** of the 36th.

The Committee Substitute to HB 1055 was unanimously adopted.

HB 1055 passed by substitute by a vote of 50 to 2.

The clerk read HB 301, which strengthens current dog fighting law in Georgia by imposing tougher penalties on spectators and participants of dog fighting exhibitions. Sen. **Chip Rogers** of the 21st took the well to present the bill.

Sen. **Robert Brown** of the 26th took the well to present Amendment 1, which states that dogs that have been confiscated for fighting must be sprayed or neutered.

Amendment 1 was unanimously adopted.

The Committee Substitute to HB 301 was unanimously adopted as amended.

HB 301 passed by substitute by a vote of 54 to 0.

The clerk read HB 296, which reduces the number of special elections that can be held to submit questions to voters. Majority Leader **Tommie Williams** of the 19th took the well to present the bill. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Steve Thompson** of the 33rd, **Brown** and **J.B. Powell** of the 23rd.

The Committee Substitute to HB 296 was unanimously adopted.

HB 296 passed by substitute by a vote of 51 to 2.

The clerk read HB 291, which creates the Georgia Arts Alliance to foster public-private partnership for the support of the arts and economic development in Georgia. Sen. **Chance** took the well to present the bill.

The Committee Substitute to HB 291 was unanimously adopted.

HB 291 passed by substitute by a vote of 53 to 0.

The clerk read HB 77, which allows local governments to apply for Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) permits for the installation of red light cameras. Sen. **Murphy** took the well to present the bill. He yielded to questions from Sens. **Tate**, **Bulloch** and **Dan Moody** of the 56th.

Sen. **Douglas** took the well to speak against giving the DOT authority to regulate red light cameras. He yielded to questions from Sen. **Murphy**.

Sen. **John Wiles** of the 37th took the well to speak in support of regulation by the DOT.

Sen. **Balfour** took the well to speak in support of the bill and the revenue generated by red light cameras.

Sen. **Thompson** of the 33rd took the well to urge passage of the bill.

Sen. **Dan Weber** of the 40th took the well to speak in support of the local control clause in the bill and that it adds a layer of protection at the state level.

Lt. Gov. **Cagle** questioned the validity of the amendments, and asked for a ruling on germaneness.

Sen. **Balfour** moved for a rule on the germaneness of Amendments 1-6. Amendments 1-3 were ruled germane.

Sen. **Judson Hill** of 32nd moved to withdraw Amendment 6. There was no objection.

Sen. **Murphy** moved to withdraw Amendment 2. There was no objection.

Amendment 1 was unanimously adopted.

Sen. **Williams** moved to table HB 77 and Amendments 1, 3 and 3a. The motion passed by a vote of 49 to 4.

Following the announcements, Sen. **Williams** moved that the Senate stand adjourned until 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 18.

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